

Amendments to the Claims

Please replace claims 1-15 with the following claims 16-33:

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16. (New) A paper strip dispensing and cutting apparatus comprising:
a housing;
a drum mounted for rotation in the housing, the drum having at least one groove and the at least one groove having a width;
a shaft mounted in the housing adjacent the drum, the shaft mounted for rotation, the shaft having an outer diameter and a central section having a diameter less than the outer diameter, and the central section having a width greater than the width of the at least one groove of the drum; and
at least one belt mounted on the drum and the shaft, the belt mounted in the at least one groove of the drum and in the central section of the shaft;
wherein the width of the central section of the shaft allows the at least one belt to deflect laterally over an amplitude " α " when a paper strip is pulled laterally from the paper strip dispensing apparatus.
17. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the drum comprises an axis of rotation and the shaft comprises an axis of rotation, and wherein the axis of rotation of the shaft is substantially parallel to the axis of rotation of the drum.
18. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the central section comprises shoulders, the shoulders adapted to prevent the lateral movement of the at least one belt beyond the central section.
19. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 17,

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wherein the central section comprises shoulders, the shoulders adapted to prevent the lateral movement of the at least one belt beyond the central section.

20. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein at least one belt consists of a belt.

21. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the paper strip comprises one of a hand-wipe and toilet paper.

22. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the housing is a wall-mounted housing.

23. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the drum accommodates a strip-cutting mechanism.

24. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the drum comprises a hollow drum.

25. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 24, wherein the hollow drum accommodates a strip-cutting mechanism.

26. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the central section comprises a dolly axle.

27. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the at least one belt is float mounted between the drum and the shaft to permit lateral deflection of the belt when the paper strip is dispensed from the apparatus.

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28. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, further comprising a reel for holding paper strip mounted in the housing.

29. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the housing comprises an opening for dispensing the paper strip, and wherein the shaft at least partially obstructs the opening.

30. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 16, wherein the central section comprises a smooth, curvilinear surface over which the at least one belt laterally deflects.

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31. (New) A paper strip dispensing and cutting apparatus comprising:
a housing;

a drum mounted for rotation in the housing, the drum having at least one groove and the at least one groove having a width; and

a control and safety device comprising:

a shaft mounted in the housing adjacent the drum, the shaft mounted for rotation, the shaft having an outer diameter and a central section having a diameter less than the outer diameter, and the central section having a width greater than the width of the at least one groove of the drum; and

at least one belt mounted on the drum and the shaft, the belt mounted in the at least one groove of the drum and in the central section of the shaft;

wherein the width of the central section of the shaft allows the at least one belt to deflect laterally over an amplitude "α" when a paper strip is pulled laterally from the paper strip dispensing apparatus.

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~~32. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 31, wherein the drum comprises an axis of rotation and the shaft comprises an axis of rotation, and wherein the axis of rotation of the shaft is substantially parallel to the axis of rotation of the drum.~~

~~33. (New) The paper strip dispensing apparatus as recited in claim 31, wherein the drum accommodates a strip-cutting mechanism.~~
